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HISTORY



OF

THE MISSION

OF THE

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

TO THE

CHINESE IN CALIFORNIA.

1877.



B. F. Sterrett, Printer, 532 Clay Street.





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SAN FRANCISCO :
B. F. STERETT, PRINTER, 532 CLAY STREET,
1877.

SEPTEMBER, 1877.

Present Agents Employed.

O. GIBSON.....SUPERINTENDENT.
 MRS. E. C. GIBSON.....ASSISTANT.
 MRS. JANE WALKER.....“

CHAN PAK KWAI.....CHINESE ASSISTANT.
 LAU HOK HAN.....“ “
 CHU LOY YAN.....“ “
 CHAN HON FAN.....“ “

MISS M. A. SALISBURY.....TEACHER.
 MR. H. W. STOWE.....“
 MRS. ALICE STOWE.....“
 MR. T. P. TYLER.....“
 MRS. MILLER.....“

Chinese Church Members.....63
 Probationers.....5
 Women and Girls in the Asylum.....27

Average attendance Evening and Sunday Schools.

In San Francisco.....100
 In San Jose.....20

Average attendance Regular Sunday Service,

Mission House.....50
 Daily Preaching at Chapel.....50

HISTORY.

In June, 1868, Rev. O. Gibson, who had served ten years in the Foo Chow China Mission, was appointed by Bishop E. Thomson, missionary to the Chinese in California. The only instructions given by Bishop Thomson were: "Go and commence *de novo*. Use your own judgment, and do the best you can."

Following these instructions, about two years were spent by the missionary in efforts to interest the Christian sentiment of the Pacific Coast more largely in the evangelization of the Chinese among us. He was kindly received in all the evangelical churches, and lectured and preached quite extensively in California, Nevada and Oregon. Considerable new interest in this hitherto much neglected work was thus created in all Protestant churches, and a system of Sunday and evening schools for instructing the Chinese in the English language was inaugurated in nearly all Christian denominations. This system of Chinese missionary work is still in successful operation in many parts of the state.

While engaged in this general work the missionary also collected special funds towards founding a Chinese Mission House, and on Christmas day, 1870, the commodious and well-furnished



MISSION HOUSE, 916 WASHINGTON STREET, SAN FRANCISCO,

Was dedicated to the cause of Christian missions among the Chinese in America, and was *deeded, free of all debt or incumbrance, to the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.* The building is 56x70 feet, three stories high above the basement, and contains four fine school-rooms, an asylum department for Chinese women and girls, parsonage for the Superintendent, and rooms for the assistant missionary and teachers, beside the basement, designed for rental purposes. Total cost of building and furnishing, \$31,000. This enterprise has never been involved in debt, and has never paid a farthing of interest. The location is good. The building has always been kept in good repair, and is a standing credit to the church to which it belongs, and to the city in which it stands.

SCHOOLS.

A central, graded, evening school for the Chinese was at once opened, and has been continued to the present time, with constantly-increasing numbers and interest. The average attendance the first year did not exceed twenty-five. The present average attendance (1877) is eighty, with a roll-call of about one hundred and fifty. This school employs four teachers,

besides the Superintendent. The teachers, with one exception, receive \$25 per month salary for teaching in this evening school.

The scholars furnish their own books, and a nominal charge of \$1 per month is made for tuition. The payment of this tuition is left altogether optional with the scholars, none being excluded for non-payment, and yet the receipts from this source amount to about \$400 per year of ten months. The scholars learn to read and spell, to write and sing; they study Geography, Arithmetic, Grammar and History, *and the Bible*, and seem equally interested in all their studies. They are well-behaved, respectful and studious, and seem to appreciate what is being done for them. A number of the most advanced and intelligent scholars of this school have become earnest Christians, and are acceptable members of the church, while hundreds of others have been led to desert their idols, and, in theory at least, embrace the doctrine of one God.

These scholars are scattered all over the country; some have returned to China, and some to Japan, and everywhere cherish grateful memories of the school and of its Christian teachers.

Results of this class, though not capable of being embodied in statistical reports, yet are sure and powerful agencies in undermining idolatry and lifting up the Redeemer. It may not be too much to say that the indirect results, of this Chinese Mission in California, would well repay the church for all the labor and money expended upon it, even if there had been no additions to her membership from among the heathen.

WORK IN THE CHINESE LANGUAGE.

Nearly all the Chinese in America come from the Canton Province of China, and speak a dialect entirely different from the people of Foo Chow, where Mr. Gibson had previously labored. A new and difficult dialect had to be learned before the Missionary could at all make himself understood by these Chinamen from the Canton Province. To aid in this work of preaching the Gospel in the Chinese language, Rev. Hu Sing Me, an ordained native deacon of the Foo Chow Mission, was transferred to the California Conference, and appointed to aid in this mission work. He arrived with his family in January, 1871.

Great hopes were entertained that this native agency would be eminently successful; but the Rev. Hu Sing Me, after spending about two years in the mission, the most of which time was devoted to learning the Canton dialect, became dissatisfied, unhappy and useless, and in June, 1873, he returned to the work in his native country.

The first person baptised in this mission was Chow Loke Chee—baptized in October, 1871. On the departure of Mr. Hu Sing Me, Chow Loke Chee was employed as assistant-preacher to his own people. He labored faithfully and successfully until August, 1875, when he also returned to China, married, and is now employed as translator in connection with a newspaper of Hong Kong.

The preaching place from the first has been a small chapel at 620 Jackson street, known as the Foke Yam Tong, or Gospel Temple. It was opened as a chapel in April, 1872, and, from that time to this, the rule has

been to open this chapel at two o'clock P. M. every day for preaching the Gospel in the Chinese language to all those who come in.

At first the people were shy, standing at the doorway, but fearing to enter. Now, whenever the door is opened, the chapel is soon filled. Many thousands of Chinese have heard something of the Gospel in this Chapel, and this Foke Yam Tong is known among the Chinese all over the land. A number of our most substantial members of the church are also the fruits of this department of the work.

RESULTS, INDIRECT.

1. A splendid property, worth \$35,000.
2. A well-established and popular school, with an average attendance of 80.
3. Hundreds of scholars, scattered all over this country, and in China and Japan, who have been under the influence of this school for a longer or shorter time.
4. The confidence and respect of the Chinese in America, who generally recognize the Mission as one of their strongest friends and protectors.
5. A permanent preaching place in Chinatown proper, where the Gospel has been daily preached in the Chinese language for about five years.
6. Many thousands of Chinese, in all parts of the country and in China, who have heard more or less of the Gospel in this chapel.
7. An asylum for helpless, enslaved Chinese women and girls, seventy-five of which class have already enjoyed its protection. Present number, 26.

DIRECT RESULTS.

Baptized and received into the church—

During conference year ending September, 1872...	7
“ “ “ “ “ 1873..	11
“ “ “ “ “ 1874..	16
“ “ “ “ “ 1875...	9
“ “ “ “ “ 1876..	8
“ “ “ “ “ 1877...	23
	—
	74

Of this number five are now in China; twelve are the fruits of the branch work at San Jose, under the immediate care of Mrs. M. F. Burns; eighteen are the fruits of the Womans' Missionary Society; four are now engaged as assistant preachers or student helpers, and give promise of usefulness. One of those in China (Chow Loke Chee) is a licensed local preacher.

The members of this Mission are now organized into a regular church or charge, with stewards, class-leaders, exhorters, quarterly meetings, love-feasts and missionary collections.

TIME OF SERVICES AT THE MISSION HOUSE

Evening Schools, daily... ..	7 to 9 P. M.
Song Services and Bible Class, Wednesday.	7 to 9 P. M.
Sunday Bible and Catechism Classes	11 A. M.
Preaching in Chinese by the Superintend't.	12 M.
Sunday-School for Women	1½ P. M.
General Sunday-School	6 P. M.
General Class-meeting	8 P. M.

SERVICES AT THE CHAPEL, 620 JACKSON STREET.

Preaching in Chinese by native preachers, daily.	2 P. M.
Mr. Stowe's School, daily	10 A. M.
Mr. Stowe's Sunday-School	1 P. M.

Friends of the mission work, whether permanent residents of the Coast or visitors from abroad, are always welcome to any of these services; and their occasional visits encourage both the missionary and the native Christians.

We are also praying that God may put it in the heart of some one who has the means to educate one of our young men for the ministry. This is especially important for service in this country. We have a young and promising candidate, called of God to this work. Has God called any one to help him to a Christian education?



Christian Work Among Chinese Women.

(By the Secretary of the Woman's Missionary Society.)

The Chinese women on the Pacific Coast are, most of them, brought here to fill houses of prostitution, or to be secondary wives to the Chinese who are able to support them.

Many of them are sold by their parents or relatives, when quite young, as servants, and at a suitable age are sold into lives of vice.

Some, while little children, are kidnapped by men who roam about the country and make their living by stealing and selling children.

It is obvious that many of these women who find themselves strangers in this country, are unwilling slaves in the worst kind of servitude.

One can scarcely imagine a more hopeless life than that led by these poor creatures. Living where they

cannot speak the language of the people, and fearing to make their troubles known to their own countrymen, was it at all strange that among the items in the morning papers one would often read that the night previous a Chinese woman committed suicide? Some of the ladies of San Francisco, reading such paragraphs, began to think of the condition of these poor women, and to wonder if they could help them to a better life. They seemed entirely out of reach. With the barrier of an unknown language between them, they were widely separated from Christian women.

But something must be done. Hence the "Woman's Missionary Society of the Pacific Coast" was organized in August, 1870, the object being, as stated in their constitution, to "elevate and save heathen women on these shores." It wished to become a branch of the W. F. M. Society, for if that Society ever had legitimate work to do, it is here among the idolatrous heathen women at our very doors. But the innocent-looking word *foreign* in their Constitution prevented them from receiving this Society as a branch. Then the Society turned to the Parent Missionary Society, asking that the Missionary Board would recognize their work and appropriate funds for this special purpose. In this direction they met with more encouragement; the Missionary Board having every year appropriated the funds for this work and the W. M. S. has remitted to the Parent Society such funds as it has been able to raise.

The ladies were organized for work, but how were they to reach the women whom they wished to aid? They need not scatter notices among them, as they could not read, and the men would not tell the help-

less women of a place of refuge. The officers of the Society let it be known at the police station that they had rooms fitted up as an asylum for any who might wish to escape from their life of bondage. Still no one came.

In May, 1871, a school was opened, and Miss M. E. Williams was employed as teacher for three hours daily, with a salary of \$25 a month.

Some of the ladies also visited the women, accompanied by Mrs. Sing Mi, a Chinese Christian woman, who could speak both Chinese and English. They invited the women to come to the school, and the children were especially urged to attend. But this effort was not successful, only about eight pupils accepting the invitation, and the teacher was often obliged to go to their houses and bring even them to school. After eight months of trial it was thought advisable to close this school, for though the teacher was most faithful, the school did not meet the wants of the Society. In October, 1871, more than a year after the organization of the Society, the first woman sought refuge in the Mission House. She had wearied of her sad life, and knowing but one way to be rid of it, had gone to the Bay and thrown herself into the water to end life and sorrow together. She was rescued and taken to the police station, whence she was sent to the Mission House. It might be well in passing, to state that this woman is now married to a Christian Chinese man, and that herself and husband adorn their profession by well-ordered lives.

In January 1873, there were three women in the care of the Society, and, as it seemed probable that the number would increase, it was thought best to hire a

teacher who should devote her whole time to the work in the Mission House, and in visiting among the women outside. Miss L. S. Templeton was engaged for this work, with a salary of \$750 a year. It was soon apparent that she must confine her labors to the Asylum, as the women from outside would come to school only for a day, and then simply for the purpose of enticing away those already there.

After working over three years in the school, Miss T., not feeling able to take the entire charge of the girls, and the Society not having funds to warrant them in hiring an assistant, resigned her position, and Mrs. J. Walker was called to the place in September, 1876, and for the last year has had all the management of the girls, teaching and doing the work of a matron in the most satisfactory manner.

There are seventy-one names recorded on the books of the Society, representing those who have sought its protection. The Society commenced work without any definite plan as to how it should be carried on, waiting for Providence to open the way and circumstances to denote what should be done. At first, women were received into the Asylum for a longer or shorter time, as they might choose, but experience led to the adoption of the present rule, by which none are received for less time than one year.

Some of the women are placed in the school by Chinamen who wish to marry them at the end of the year, they paying \$60 for board. There are also twelve girls, formerly servants, who ran away from their masters on account of ill treatment.

These girls have placed themselves under the care of the Society which supports them, educates them, and

will endeavor to marry them to Christian Chinamen. It is hoped that some of them will teach and bless their heathen sisters.

A few of the girls are supported by ladies who pay \$5 a month or \$60 a year for their board. Ladies in this Conference support girls. The Howard-street Sunday School supports one, and a lady in Baltimore, Md., Miss S. E. Johnson, supports two. This seems to have a very good influence on the girls, as they feel that some one is interested in them and some one is praying for their welfare. The ladies would be glad to have the support of all these girls assumed by Christian women, or men who feel that they would like to do something in this way for Jesus; for, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

Twenty-three women have been legally married from the Asylum. There are now twenty-seven inmates. Two have been sent to the Mission House from Oregon, one from Vallejo, one from Stockton, and one from Sonoma. Eighteen have been baptized. Two of the number have returned to China, and one has been expelled from church membership. The expenses during the past year, including teacher's salary, boarding and lodging of the women, are about \$1800 coin. The girls clothe themselves with proceeds of their work, done out of school hours. The teacher conducts a class and prayer meeting in the Mission House every Tuesday evening. At 10 o'clock Sunday morning the girls have a prayer meeting led by one of their number. They attend church service in their own language at 12 o'clock every Sunday, and at 1½ o'clock Sunday School. There is also a general Sunday School

which they attend every Sunday evening. Wednesday evening the girls spend an hour in Mr. Gibson's school room, in singing, led by Bro. J. W. Butler, Supt. of Grace M. E. Sunday School, who deserves our hearty thanks for his kind and gratuitous labor.

The Society has not the means it needs for carrying on its work. The large and constantly increasing work outside the Mission House has to be neglected for want of funds and laborers.

The women who have been with us a year, and who have renounced the worship of idols, need constant help and encouragement. There should be a Bible woman, who would go to their homes to read to, and instruct them in the way of truth. We need teachers for the Sunday School, so that we can invite them in to learn the Scriptures and hear of Jesus. There has never been a year of such trial to the Society as the past. It is not that the work is less encouraging, for it was never more prosperous than now. But it has never been so difficult to raise money as during the past year. Something is probably due to the hard times which have prevailed over the whole country, and the attitude of the public press, against anything that is Chinese, has perhaps had its effect upon our Christian people. But the apathy of Christians to this work which God has thrust upon His people of the Pacific Coast is truly lamentable.

We cannot get away from our plain duty by asking, "Am I my brother's keeper?" *We must meet the responsibility of teaching these heathen in our midst the knowledge of the true God, and He will require their souls at our hands.*

Article III. of Constitution of W. M. Society says :

“ Any person may become a member of this Society by paying one dollar per annum in advance, and any person paying five dollars per quarter, for one year, or twenty dollars at any one time, shall be constituted a life member.”

Will not every Methodist woman of the Pacific Coast contribute to this cause, by becoming either an annual or life member of this Society.

All funds for the “ *Woman's Missionary Society* ” should be sent to the treasurer, Mrs. R. McElroy, 917 Howard street, San Francisco.

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 12th, 1877.



